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1875.

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S. M. HULIN, Publisher.

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From the Rural New Yorker.

HOW MRS. POLLY HAD THE BLUES.

BY LEUCY C. ORDWAY.

"There is nothing like a real, good, old-

fashioned rag carpet for steady, every-day

wear, I think," remarked Mrs. Polly in

one of her long sentences without any

omissions. "We've worn out three in our

kitchen, and I have almost enough for

another.

She brought from the storeroom a

huge basket of tangled strips, ready cut

for joining, and another of tightly-wound

balls. There were bits of bonnet strings

that had seen better days, suggestions of

dresses that had been the pride of the

three-year-old baby not many months

ago, a piece of James' old coat and half

of the cravat which he had worn at his

wedding. James had only been married

a year. There was the old red table-

cloth, too, cut into bright ribbons; "for,"

said Mrs. Polly, when she brought it

to the sacrifice, "it's only cotton, and is

about worn out, anyway." That was the

day when Martha secretly hid her new

white lawn, for "when mother once suc-

cumbed to the carpet fever, every piece

of dry goods in the house might tremble

with fear!" Ah! if the soft heap in

that basket could but speak, what tales it

could unfold!

"I'll just count the balls, I guess, and

see how many pounds I have," said Mrs.

Polly to herself. Let me see. I should

think they would weigh a pound, at

least"—balancing one in her hand. She

considered a moment, then rose from her

chair and walked into the kitchen. Presently

she returned and brought with her the

steelyards. "I never did believe in

those nose-fangled weighing affairs,"

Mrs. Polly had often said, when remon-

strated with by her daughter for her af-

fection for the old steelyards that had

been part of her dower. One of the

balls was now hung upon the hook, and

Mrs. Polly stood, breathlessly awaiting

the result. It marked just one pound,

which seemed to afford her great satisfac-

tion. She sat down and began to count

the balls, but suddenly a new thought

seemed to disturb her, for the counting

ceased, and she deliberately turned the

basket over, letting all the balls roll out.

Then she laid all the yellow ones togeth-

er in one pile, the green ones in another, the

white in another, and so on, till they

were all sorted out. The blue pile proved

to be very small indeed—only one ball.

"Julia," remarked Mrs. Polly to her

daughter, who had just entered the room,

"I do believe I shall have to color some

more blue. I haven't enough cut to

make another ball. Now I think of it,

those painters left a lot of blue stuff in

the cellar last fall, and I shouldn't be

surprised if it was just the thing."

There is no time like the present for

Mrs. Polly, so her daughter was not sur-

prised to see her rise and proceed at once

to the cellar. After a few minutes she

returned triumphantly, bringing the

"blue stuff" with her. Not long after a

kettle was put over the fire, and Mrs.

Polly might have been seen rushing fan-

tastically over the house in search of rags.

"Mother, don't take my new silk

dress," cried Julia from the sitting-room,

"Spare my coat," sang out James, Jun-

ior, from the back porch. "The best

tablecloths are in the top drawer,"

screamed somebody else from the front

hall; but Mrs. Polly maintained a digni-

fied and severe silence in the midst of

all this tumult, and calmly plunged into

the boiling liquid a whole armful of sus-

picious-looking garments.

"Julia, Julia, come and see what a

beautiful color this is!" exclaimed Mrs.

Polly, lifting the smoking cloth up and

down on a stick. "I'm sure I am very

thankful to those painters."

It was not long after this that the

bright blue rags were hung on the line

in the back porch to dry, and that very

afternoon Mrs. Polly, well pleased with

her success, sat down in her low rocker

to cut the beautiful new strips.

"These rags are so thin, I believe I

can tear them," she said to herself, and

the thought was forthwith put into ex-

ecution.

"Mother, what a dust you are mak-

ing!" complained the daughter, who did

dancy work.

"Well, colored rags always make a

dust when they are torn," replied the

mother. "It won't hurt anything."

"I should think not! Just look at my

work!" and she held up a bit of embroi-

dery, covered with a fine blue dust.

Mrs. Polly does not believe in sewing

rags for a carpet. She cuts a slit in the

end of one, rounds the corners of another,

then loops them together, and it does

not take half the time. So this after-

noon the blue balls were nearly complet-

ed before the door bell rang and admit-

ted the omnipresent agent.

"Madam, can I sell you a beautiful

Bible this afternoon? It is very finely

illustrated, and has extra fine paper,

and—